



DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

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MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS  
CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF  
UNDER SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE  
ASSISTANT SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE  
GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
ASSISTANTS TO THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
DIRECTOR, ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT  
DIRECTORS OF THE DEFENSE AGENCIES  
CHIEF, NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU

SUBJECT: DoD Year 2000 (Y2K) Support to Civil Authorities

References:

- a. DoD Directive 3025.1, Military Support to Civil Authorities (MSCA), dated 1 January 1993.
- b. DoD Directive 3025.15, Military Assistance to Civil Authorities (MACA), dated 15 February 1997.
- c. DoD Directive 5100.46, Foreign Disaster Relief, dated 4 December 1975.

In order to ensure its operational readiness, the Department is engaged in a sustained and comprehensive program of Y2K systems, network, and operational testing, as well as contingency assessments. The results of these efforts are demonstrating that the Department will remain fully mission capable throughout the millenium change. Similar efforts in the public and private sectors have resulted in great strides toward Y2K compliance. Despite these efforts, it is possible that localized system failures will occur, and that the possibility for more widespread, systemic problems, both domestically and internationally, cannot be ruled out.

Accordingly, the Department is taking prudent action to ensure its ability to meet its national security responsibilities and, consistent with those responsibilities, to respond to requests for assistance from civil authorities both domestically and overseas throughout the Y2K date transition period. To that end, the following guidance is provided.

DoD support to civil authorities will only be provided in accordance with applicable law, DoD directives, and implementing Service regulations. The above references provide broad authority, direction, and evaluation criteria for DoD responses to civil emergencies and disasters. They have been tested in numerous situations and have proved to be effective.

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However, past DoD responses typically have been applied to localized, acute situations, most of which have not been simultaneous. By contrast, the Y2K problem has the potential to involve a large number of events that occur over broad geographic areas, within a short time frame.

The broad, near-simultaneous, systemic nature of potential problems during the Y2K date transition could lead to two types of stresses on DoD resources and operational readiness:

- Immediate responses that appear rational from a local perspective, but could collectively undermine the Department's ability to execute operational missions, and
- Prioritizations, which are made on the basis of requests as they are received, but which may quickly become outdated as higher priority requests are received for support already committed elsewhere.

Against this background, it is important to establish a set of criteria that more clearly establishes the Department's focus and response to domestic and foreign requests for military assistance. Accordingly, this memorandum amplifies existing guidance both to utilize and to protect DoD resources for warfighting priorities through the Y2K date transition.

As a basic principle, commanders will not compromise operational readiness in providing support to civil authorities. As directed in reference b, all requests by civil authorities for military assistance shall be evaluated by DoD approval authorities against their impact on DoD's ability to perform its primary national security missions. Within the United States, local commanders may undertake immediate, unilateral, emergency response actions that involve measures to save lives, prevent human suffering, or mitigate great property damage, only when time does not permit approval by higher headquarters. Overseas, immediate response may be undertaken when time is of the essence and humanitarian considerations require action.

Except for immediate response as described above, requests for DoD support will be considered only if submitted through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) or appropriate offices of the Department of State. The National Guard will continue its traditional role of providing military support to civil authorities through their respective State Governors, and will simultaneously ensure its ability to respond to national security requirements. Accordingly, the following priorities will be adhered to in responding to domestic emergencies and to any Department of State requests for foreign DoD assistance throughout the Y2K transition period. For the purpose of this memorandum, the Y2K transition date period is defined to be from 1 September 1999 through 31 March 2000.

**Priority 1.** The Department will retain the capability to take all actions necessary to carry out its essential national security missions. Military units and organizations, to include the Reserve Components, with the assignments indicated below will not divert resources during the Y2K date transition that could compromise operational readiness without the authorization of the Secretary of Defense or his designated representative.

- a. Direct support to the National Command Authority.
- b. Conduct of ongoing or imminent military operations.
- c. Conduct of ongoing or imminent intelligence operations.
- d. Conduct of nuclear command and control.
- e. Maintenance of Defense and commercial infrastructures essential to support of the above.

**Priority 2.** Except for immediate response situations, resources in military units and combat support organizations, to include the Reserve Components, assigned to support standing operations plans must be monitored closely, particularly if they fall within early execution (first 60 days) of Timed Phased Force and Deployment Data (TPFDD). Responses to requests for consumable or irrecoverable resources in this category must be approved by the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) or his designated representative.

**Priority 3:** Maintenance of domestic public health and safety. Such activities may include:

- a. Maintenance of emergency services (e.g., fire, ambulance, police, hospitals, and related communications).
- b. Maintenance of air traffic, rail, port, and ship navigation systems (e.g., Air Traffic Control System).
- c. Food distribution.
- d. Support to public information dissemination (press, television, and radio).

**Priority 4:** Maintenance of the economy and the Nation's quality of life. These activities include, for example:

- a. Support to other Federal Agencies
- b. Support to local mass transit systems.

Adjudication of FEMA and State Department requests involving multiple, systemic, or seemingly equal priority requests for domestic MSCA or Foreign Disaster Assistance (FDA) that could affect the Department's ability to conduct the above operations, will be made by the Secretary of Defense or his designated representative in consultation with:

- Secretary of the Army (for domestic requests for MSCA),
- The CJCS and appropriate CINCs (for FDA requests).

This policy memo is the first in a series designed to ensure the Department's ability to effectively respond to the many and varied demands that may be placed upon it during the Y2K date transition period. I solicit your active and continuous support as we prepare to meet these potential challenges.

